

## Message Text

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ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 DODE-00 PM-03 SS-15 NSC-05

SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 SR-02 ORM-01

AID-05 L-02 H-01 /062 W  
----- 060182

R 261047Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2678  
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
USMISSION GENEVA  
CINCPAC  
CDR JCRC CP SAMAE SAN THAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 1394

D/PW FOR HENDERSON

GENEVA FOR SIEVERTS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MOPS, CASC, LA  
SUBJECT: DEAN CASE: LPF AGAIN DENIES KNOWLEDGE OF  
DEAN/SHARMAN WHEREABOUTS

REF: VIENTIANE 1388

1. AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY HAS FURNISHED US AMBASSADOR BORTH-WICK'S REPORT TO CANBERRA ON HIS MEETING WITH PGNU FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT MORNING FEBRUARY 26 TO DELIVER LETTER FROM GOA FONMIN WILLESEE (REFTEL). TEXT OF REPORT FOLLOWS:

A. QUOTE - I SAW PHOUMI BY APPOINTMENT THIS MORNING AND DELIVERED THE MINISTER'S LETTER. HE PRODUCED A LETTER TO HIMSELF FROM NLHX REPRESENTATIVE VIENTIANE DATED 24 FEBRUARY WHICH HE SAID WOULD BE FORWARDED TO US AS SOON AS TRANSLATED. IT AMOUNTED IN EFFECT TO AN CONFIDENTIAL

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UNCOMPROMISING RESTATEMENT THAT CAREFUL ENQUIRY HAD

DISCLOSED NO TRACE OF PRISONERS' ENTRY OR PRESENCE IN NLHX ZONE, PLUS CRITICISM OF KHAM KEUT EVIDENCE PROVIDED BY FAR ESCAPEE SINCE THEIR SCRUPULOUS OBSERVANCE OF TREATY AND PROTOCOL RULED OUT POSSIBILITY OF EXISTENCE OF ANY SUCH. AS WELL MEKONG WAS ALSO TRAVERSED BY THAI PATROL BOATS WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE.

B. QUOTE - I SAID TO THE MINISTER THAT THIS REPLY WOULD BE BOUND TO HAVE THE MOST PAINFUL AND UNFORTUNATE EFFECT. WE WERE WHOLELY CONVINCED THAT SHARMAN HAD BEEN TAKEN PRISONER AT THEIR CHECKPOINT AND UNTIL MID-DECEMBER IMPRISONED AT KHAM KEUT. TO DENY ALL THIS CALLED INTO QUESTION GOOD FAITH OF NLHX IN THEIR DEALINGS WITH A FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT. A SOLUTION TO THIS ISSUE WOULD SURELY BE IN OUR COMMON INTEREST AND THIS MESSAGE WAS NOT TAKING US VERY FAR. IN COURSE OF DISCUSSION, PHOUMI LEFT ME WITH IMPRESSION THAT IT HAD BEEN PREPARED IN RESPONSE TO OUR REPRESENTATIONS OF MID-JANUARY. WITHOUT DISOWNING IT HE SAID HE WOULD ASK VIENG SAY FOR A FURTHER EXAMINATION OF ALL THE EVIDENCE TOGETHER WITH ANYTHING FURTHER WE COULD PRODUCE.

C. QUOTE - FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH THERE MAY BE SOME ENCOURAGEMENT IN THIS ASSURANCE. THE MATTER IS NOT REGARDED AS CLOSED NOR COULD WE ALLOW IT TO BE. EVEN SO I CANNOT PRETEND TO FIND MUCH COMFORT IN THE MESSAGE ITSELF. PHOUMI DENIES IMPLICATION THAT THIS IS A COVER UP MADE NECESSARY BECAUSE THE MEN ARE ALREADY DEAD, WHICH HE SAYS WOULD BE QUITE INCOMPATIBLE WITH NLHX STANDARD TREATMENT OF ITS PRISONERS.

D. QUOTE - SO FAR AS SOTH'S VISIT GOES, I SAID THAT THIS MUST HAVE AN OBVIOUS EFFECT ON POSSIBLE TIMING OF ANY VISIT AND LEFT IT AT THAT. I ASSUME THAT IF WE HAVE NO PROGRESS TO REPORT IN SIX WEEKS IT WILL BE OUT OF THE QUESTION. UNQUOTE.

2. ACCORDING TO AUSTRALIAN FIRST SECRETARY, BORTHWICK FURTHER TOLD PHOUMI THAT LPF RESPONSE WAS UNACCEPTABLE. HE THEREFORE ASKED FOR PERMISSION TO VISIT SAM NEUA TO PURSUE CASE PERSONALLY OR, FAILING THAT, TO VISIT KHAM KEUT AREA. PHOUMI REPORTEDLY DID NOT RESPOND DIRECTLY TO TRAVEL REQUEST BUT INSTEAD SAID SOMETHING ABOUT CONFIDENTIAL

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INITIATING FURTHER INQUIRIES.

3. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE BORTHWICK HANDLED THIS LATEST LPF "RESPONSE" CORRECTLY. WE RECOMMEND THAT, AS WITH PREVIOUS INFORMATION ON THIS CASE, WORD OF THIS DEVELOPMENT BE PASSED TO DEAN'S PARENTS WITH OUR OBSERVATION THAT IT APPEARS TO BE NO MORE CONCLUSIVE (OR MORE SATISFACTORY) THAN WAS LPF COMMUNICATION OF DECEMBER 23.

4. WE INTEND TO PROCEED WITH PLANS DESCRIBED VIENTIANE  
1341. IN ADDITION, AMBASSADOR WILL SEE PRIME MINISTER,  
FOREIGN MINISTER, SOVIET AMBASSADOR AND PERHAPS PRINCE  
SOUPHANOVONG TO COMMUNICATE OUR DISSATISFACTION WITH  
LPF POSITION AND TO PRESS AGAIN FOR PGNU/LPF ACTION.

WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** WELFARE & WHEREABOUTS, DETENTION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 26 FEB 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** MartinML  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ACTION DPW  
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**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Date:** 30 JUN 2003  
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**TAGS:** MOPS, CASC, LA, AS, US, (DEAN, CHARLES), (SHARMAN), (BORTHWICK)  
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